

**Cycloidal configurations, or The harvest of counterfeiters. Containing matter of the highest importance concerning paper money. Also explaining the unit system of bank note engraving. By W.L. Ormsby**

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Ormsby, W. L. (Waterman Lilly), 1809-1883.  
New York, W.L. Ormsby [1862?]

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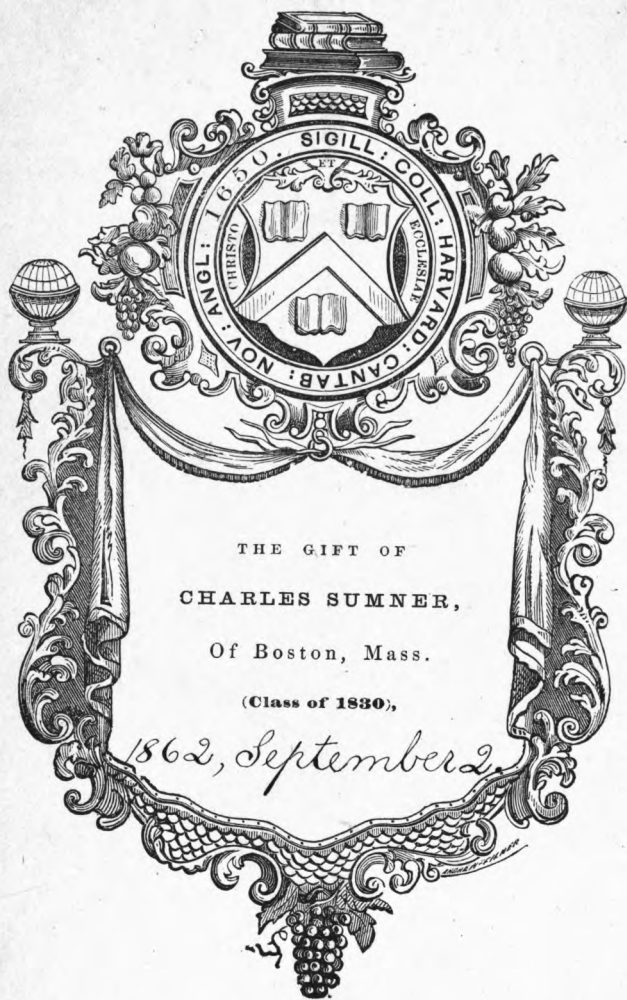


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**CYCLOIDAL CONFIGURATIONS**

OR THE

**HARVEST OF COUNTERFEITERS.**

CONTAINING MATTER OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE CONCERNING

**PAPER MONEY.**

ALSO EXPLAINING

**THE UNIT SYSTEM OF BANK NOTE ENGRAVING.**

**By W. L. ORMSBY,**

**PROPRIETOR OF THE NEW YORK BANK NOTE CO., NO. 50 WALL ST.**

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**"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
Makes deeds ill done."**

---

**NEW YORK:**

**PUBLISHED BY W. L. ORMSBY,**

**50 WALL STREET.**

**Price Twenty-five Cents.**

1862

# NOTICE.

THE following mechanical inventions adapted to the business of engraving, have been designed and perfected by the author of this work during the last thirty years. They are respectfully submitted as a partial testimonial to the writer's familiarity with the subject on which he treats.

LIST OF INVENTIONS.	DATE OF INVENTION.
1. Ruling machine for straight and waved lines, . . .	1832
2. " " medallion, upright, . . .	1833
3. " " " horizontal, . . .	1834
4. Automaton operator of the above, . . .	1834
5. Hardened steel dies for Iris Buttons made with the above, . . .	1835
6. Machine for engraving on Colt's pistols, . . .	1836
7. " for registering the movements of Bank Note printing presses, . . .	1839
8. Kaleidoscopic combinations of geometrical lathe work,	1839
9. Improvements on the Bogardus transfer press, . . .	1840
10. The grammagraph for engraving map letters, . . .	1841
11. Machine for engraving piano and carriage plates, . . .	1842
12. Machine for engraving on metal combs, . . .	1842
13. Engravers' rolettes, . . .	1844
14. The Kaleidograph, . . .	1846
15. Mathematical instrument for turning minute circles and ovals, . . .	1849
16. THE UNIT SYSTEM of engraving Bank Notes, . . .	1851
17. Geometrical lathe combining the Rose engine, . . .	1854
18. Machine for engraving on wood, . . .	1855
19. " " " pencil cases, . . .	1857
20. " " " locket and watch cases, . . .	1858
21. Ruling machine combining cycloidal, geometrical, straight, and waved lines, . . .	1858
22. Improvement in engraving metal signs, . . .	1859
23. Machine for printing steel plates in two or more colors,	1860
24. Kaleido Mosaic Engraving, . . .	1861

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## CYCLOIDAL CONFIGURATIONS,

OR THE

## HARVEST OF COUNTERFEITERS.

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"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
Makes deeds ill done."

**I**N no country in the world has the art of Bank Note Engraving presented such seeming excellence as in the United States, nor has Counterfeiting attained elsewhere such perfection and success.

From the fact that an enormous issue of Treasury Notes—made a legal tender—has been engraved in direct opposition to the experience of the past, as to the means of preventing counterfeiting, and in direct conformity with the best method of tempting and facilitating it, the writer is willing to hazard an opinion, based on a practical experience of over thirty years in the Note Engraving profession, that a grand jubilee of counterfeiting is near its advent.

Instead of having the Notes made payable in one place, entirely unlike those payable in another place, so that a counterfeit on one locality would not affect the others, they are all alike, and one successful counterfeit of each denomination will ruin the whole, and cause their repudiation or withdrawal from circulation.

There is no exception to the rule, that the greater the number of Notes of the same similitude, still greater, in

proportion, will be the number of people enticed to counterfeit them; and the higher those Notes may stand in public favor the more care will be taken to counterfeit them successfully.

In these Treasury Notes there is just enough seeming security to gain public confidence—a confidence which has often been abused, and of which the counterfeiters will again take advantage. Similar experiments have been tried before. (See Ormsby's Bank Note Engraving, page 47.)

The following notice of the first counterfeit Bank Note may be found in Francis's History of the Bank of England, vol. i. p. 170:

"The day on which a forged Note was first presented at the Bank of England, forms a memorable era in its history. For sixty-five years the establishment had circulated its paper with freedom; and during this period no attempt had been made to imitate it. He who takes the initiative in a new line of wrong-doing has more than a simple act to answer for, and to Richard William Vaughan, a Stafford linen-draper, belongs the melancholy celebrity of having led the van in this new phase of crime, in 1758. The records of his life do not show wart, or beggary, or starvation urging him, but a simple desire to seem greater than he was. *By one of the artists employed, and there were several engaged on different parts of the Notes*, the discovery was made. The criminal had filled up to the number of twenty, and deposited them in the hands of a young lady to whom he was attached, as a proof of his wealth. There is no calculating how much longer Bank Notes might have been free from imitation, had this man not shown with what ease they might be counterfeited. From this period forged Notes became common. The faculty of imitation is so great that when the expectation of profit is added there is little hope of restraining the destitute or the bad man from a career which adds the charm of novelty to the chance of gain. The publicity given to the fraud, the notoriety of the proceedings, and the *execution* of the forger, tended to excite the morbid sympathy which, up to the present day, is evinced for any extraordinary criminal. It is, therefore, possible, that if Vaughan had not been induced by circumstances to startle London with his novel crime, the idea of forging Bank Notes

might have been long delayed, and that some of the strange facts to be related would never have occurred."

The minute evidence in the trial of Vaughan disclosed the notable fact, that he had cut a Bank of England Note into as many parts as its pictorial arrangement would admit of, and that he had procured each separate part engraved on "*copper*" by different engravers in London, and that he printed these separate plates, one by one, on pieces of Bank Note paper, "to the number of twenty," by a slow but sure process.

Now, an examination into the "*modus operandi*" of modern Bank Note Engraving will disclose the fact, that a *mere capitalist* procures the separate parts engraved on STEEL, by different engravers, and that by means of "*hardening*" and "*transferring*," those separate "steel dies" are brought together on one plate, to be printed by ONE operation.

Thus, the very process of engraving the first counterfeit Note, for the invention of which the first counterfeiter was hung, is now employed in manufacturing our genuine paper currency. Our improvement on the counterfeiter's plan—if that can be called an improvement which benefits rogues more than honest men—consists in the use of steel dies, in order to combine the separate vignettes on *one plate*, and thus economize in the printing process. These dies never wear out—are never destroyed—accumulate from one generation to another, and, in the vicissitudes of business, often pass into counterfeiters' hands, making the system of constructing Bank Notes by combining and recombining small, detached vignettes, a thousand fold more dangerous and objectionable than it was in Vaughan's time. The first counterfeiter's system has, in fact, been legalized among us; and those who advocate it and practise it are, in a sense,

legalized Vaughans, in many cases, as unable to engrave anything themselves as was their notorious predecessor.

Through the natural workings of this pernicious system, political power, accumulated wealth, and constantly increasing *prestige*, are concentrated, and employed to increase the expenses of Banks, and to intercept the reward of labor in its passage from the Banker—the employer, to the engraver—the employed.

This, however, is but one of a series of interesting facts which will be revealed to the reader in the course of our cycloidal investigations.

To the Hon. Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, Congress assigned the task of issuing Treasury Notes, in denominations from five dollars upwards, and in amounts sufficient to displace almost the entire paper currency of the country; and to the Hon. J. P. Cisco, Assist. Treas. in N. Y., he transferred the power to make contracts for furnishing these Notes, without any guide or instructions as to the manner of executing them.

However honest in his intentions, Mr. Cisco could not acquire, in one day's notice, any knowledge of the best method of constructing Bank Notes to prevent forgeries; therefore he was entirely dependent upon the suggestions of those engravers with whom he consulted.

Who were the applicants for the patronage of Mr. Cisco?

At this period there were only three Bank Note Engraving Establishments in actual operation in the country, all of which were located in Wall street, New York City. Nearly every Bank and bond plate was on deposit there, or at least the “dies” or “types” that could have reproduced them, in what is equivalent to absolute identity.

The names of the three companies are as follows:

The National Bank Note Company, incorporated in 1859;

The American Bank Note Company, a consolidation of nine companies into one; incorporated in 1858. (The president and the writer were boys and fellow apprentices together in 1827, '28, '29, and '30.)

The New York Bank Note Company, not incorporated.

The business interests of the two first named companies are identically the same. The managers, skilled in diplomacy, have but one object in view, viz. to make money; and in dealing with Banks—let whichever obtain advantage—the people, owing to the peculiar system of Bank Note Engraving already noticed, must necessarily suffer in various ways, as will be seen from the following examples:

In the first place, where, through heedlessness or lack of knowledge and skill on the part of both the engraver and the Bank, a vignette is selected that has already been counterfeited. The use of such vignette again, aids the counterfeiter in a new enterprise, because he has that part already done. Also, where a “comptroller’s die” is used on all the circulating notes of a state, because a counterfeiter engraves it but once, and saves this part of his labor on every subsequent counterfeit, by merely printing it in the position required. The same is the case with every vignette or Bank Note ornament that is *repeated* on more than one Note.

In the second place, where the engravers, designedly, induce the Bank to have a plate of four 1s, another of four 2s, another of four 3s, and a fourth of four 5s, at a cost of \$2000, when one plate of 1, 2, 3, 5, would suffice, at a cost of \$500. This, certainly, only quadruples the Bank’s expenses, without much injury to the people.

The case is different, however, when the Bank is induced to use "red letters," "patent stripes," or red, yellow, and green "tints;" because all such things enable the counterfeiter to serve up his old frauds in new dresses, cheating the people over and over again, in cycloidal progression.

In the third place, where the Bank designedly imposes upon the engraver; as in forging his certificate (vide the Boon County Bank, Indiana, fraud), and as obtaining plates for apparently a valid purpose, and subsequently using them for an invalid purpose (see Ormsby's Bank Note Engraving, page 52); and, as obtaining \$500,000 in 10s and 20s for a pretended New England Bank, Maine (having no charter), for the sole purpose of altering them to represent the issues of the New England Bank, Boston. The best are often deceived.

And in the fourth place, when the climax of audacity is reached, where both the engravers and the Bank, by collusion, flood the country with fraudulent, spurious, and counterfeit issues—as, making Bills for circulation in Rhode Island, with imitation state seals, "*payable at Paddy Mills, Va;*" making \$5 *checks* on the Government Stock Bank, Ann Arbor, Mich., in exact *similitude* (state seal, or "comptroller's die" included) of the Bills of the Bank—engraving *absolute frauds* in *similitude* of stock secured Notes, and refusing, on the part of the engravers, to disclose their confederates in the transactions, as in making the City Bank and Ocean Bank Bills, Washington, a counterfeit resemblance of the Bills of the Banks of the same name in New Jersey.

It appears from the following, that the same parties who engrave the United States Treasury Notes have engraved and printed the Confederate Treasury Notes, and would have engraved and printed the bonds also, if they had not been summarily stopped by the police.

*From the World, N.Y., April 26, 1861.*

"SEIZURE OF STEEL PLATES FOR TREASURY NOTES OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES.

"The Confederate State authorities, not satisfied with obtaining the bulk of their fighting outfit in this city, arranged for plates to issue Treasury Notes to constitute the sinews of the war. Yesterday, U. S. Deputy Marshals Bersch and Horton made an important seizure of some of the plates ordered, as follow :

One bond plate, for.....\$50 notes.  
 One bond plate, for.....\$100 notes.  
 One bond plate, for.....\$500 notes.  
 One bond plate, for.....\$1000 notes.  
 Ten bond plates, for.....\$50 and \$100 notes.  
 Four bond plates, for.....\$50, \$100, \$500, and \$1000 notes.

"The above were found at the office of the American Bank Note Company. The officers of the company state that they ceased printing from them as soon as the President's proclamation was issued. The informer against them asserts that they were being printed from as late as four days ago.

"An hour after the above seizure the United States deputy marshals entered the office of the National Bank Note Company and took into their keeping two plates of cancelled Treasury Notes of the Southern Confederacy, of the denominations of \$50, \$100, \$500, and \$1000.

*"The engraving of the plates is of the best quality, and not unlike the United States Treasury Notes now in circulation.* The presidents of both companies are held to await investigation in the matter."

A few words in the above are italicised, because it looks as if the C. S. A. intended to embark in the counterfeiting business on a large scale. The fact, too, that the American Bank Note Co. has a branch in New Orleans, with duplicate "dies," "transfer presses," &c. (which branch, it is rumored, has been taken possession of, and removed to Richmond, by Mr. Jefferson Davis's government), and that an expert in the use of those materials suddenly left the parent company in N.Y., and has been heard from in that locality, together with several accomplished engravers—one of whom was



captured at Bull Run, and two of whom subsequently emigrated by the way of Chicago, where they were temporarily detained, on suspicion, for having in their possession an extensive assortment of engraving implements and materials—by no means discourages the entertainment of the idea suggested in the italics referred to. Such a proceeding would only be following the example of the most civilized governments (see Francis's History of the Bank of England, Vol. ii., page 79).

Another circumstance will throw some light on the matter under consideration, viz. that these companies have enjoyed the exclusive patronage of the U. S. government in manufacturing postage stamps as well as Treasury Notes and Bonds, and that when the C. S. A. advertised for proposals for furnishing those needful appendages, it was announced in the newspapers of the day, that these companies had sent on specimens, &c., whereupon the N. Y. Tribune remarked :

“ Insatiate archer ! could not one suffice ? ”

We now come to the third company, viz. The New York Bank Note Company, established in 1842. The title has been recently adopted, with a view to future incorporation. At present, the writer is sole owner and proprietor. The following is one of its latest recommendations :

“ UNITED STATES MARSHAL'S OFFICE. }  
New York, 23d May, 1861. }

“ I take pleasure in recommending the New York Bank Note Co., W. L. Ormsby, proprietor, to the patronage of the Bank Department ; this being the only Engraving Company that has voluntarily surrendered to this office the plates and Bills of the Banks in the Seceded States, while other Companies were compelled to surrender Secession Bonds and Treasury Notes.

ROBERT MURRAY,  
*U. S. Marshal.*”

In all ages of the world it has been considered justifiable for the oppressed to rebel; but when the highly favored are bribed to acts of disloyalty, the odium of base ingratitude is added to the crime of treason: and a Government which takes back into its most vital confidence those who have already betrayed it, must be sadly in want of honest ability.

The natural instincts of the proprietor of this company, led him, in early life, to a practical knowledge of the art of engraving—to the invention of useful engraving machines—to the study of the profession as to the means of preventing counterfeiting. He then discovered the fact that the present system of Note engraving is a system of counterfeiting in its very nature—that it was substantially invented by the first counterfeiter in the world's history, and that he was hung for practising it—that this American System was investigated and condemned by the Bank of England in 1820—that it is the cause of nearly all the counterfeiting in this country—that it originated a species of newspaper that thrives by publishing lists of counterfeits—that it causes the genuine work of the best Note engravers to be used on fraudulent Notes, even on counterfeit Treasury Notes—that the Austrian Bank counterfeits, in 1858, were made in the city of New York, in the same manner that the first counterfeit Note on the Bank of England was made in London just one hundred years before—that a part of said counterfeit was actually engraved in the office, and on the desk, of the Bank Note Engravers in Wall street—that venders of patent medicines, at present, take more effectual means to prevent counterfeits of their labels, than does any Bank, State, or General Government in the country to prevent counterfeits of their Bills, and that the system is kept in vogue by suppressing truth, and persecuting those who advocate it.

From these facts, it must be apparent that there are two distinct antagonistic principles claiming patronage, and doing business in the art of Bank Note Engraving in the United States. And the representatives of these principles were competing for the largest contracts, in their line of business, that any nation ever offered before.

By one of the most peculiar coincidences, the American, and National companies, alone, presented themselves to Mr. Cisco as the only engraving companies in the country (the New York Bank Note Co. being kept in Washington, waiting on the Treasury Department, in blissful ignorance of what was occurring).

Mr. Cisco found upon the specimens of work submitted by the National Bank Note Co. the words: "*Patented April 23, 1860.*" The "claim," as recorded in the Patent Office, may be succinctly stated thus:

"1st. The combination in repetition of the valuation or denomination, and the configuration.

"2d. Combined use in repetition of the valuation or denomination with the title of the institution or corporation, and the configuration of the geometric cycloidal waved-line or rosette."

The most ingenious feature of this patent is its title.

On the specimens submitted by the American Bank Note Co., Mr. Cisco doubtless observed the words, "*Patented 30th June, 1857.*" The "claim," as recorded in the Patent Office, is for the use of "*Sesqui-oxide of chromium*"—making what is commonly known as the "Patent Green Tint." This patent is the property, by purchase, of Mr. Tracy R. Edson, the President of the company. Of the sufficiency of this ink to prevent frauds, let others testify:—

(*Extracts from a Circular.*)

“ASSOCIATION OF BANKS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF  
COUNTERFEITING.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

“The undersigned, to whom was submitted the subject of the Green Ink for Bank Note printing, said to be patented by George Mathews of New York, under the name of ‘*The Canada Bank Note Printing Tint*,’ or ‘Patent Green Tint,’ together with specimen Bank Notes printed therewith, accompanied by the request of Mr. Tracy R. Edson of New York, that the subject might be examined into and reported upon by the Association; and the specimens submitted to the most searching experiments:—has considered the subject, and caused experiments to be made upon some of the specimens, and begs leave to

REPORT:

“ \* \* \* \* That, contrary to our sanguine hopes and expectations, the Green Ink can be, and has been, chemically discharged and removed without injury to the paper, on which both were printed together; and that, therefore, this Ink is no effectual safeguard against alterations.

“The undersigned accordingly recommends the passage, by the Committee, of the vote herewith submitted.

*Signed,*

JAMES G. CARNEY.”

“BOSTON, *August 19th*, 1857.

“Voted, unanimously: that the Executive Committee cannot recommend to the Associated Banks the adoption of the ‘Patent Green Ink,’ submitted by Mr. Edson of New York, for the prevention of counterfeiting and altering Bank Notes, as furnishing any additional security to their Issues.”

“BOSTON, *August 18th*, 1857.

*To the Executive Committee Associated Banks.*

“GENTLEMEN: \* \* \* I return the Note of the ‘City of Burlington,’ received from you, printed upon this Patent, from which I have removed a portion of the ‘Tint’ or ground work, without disturbing the Note proper, printed in carbon ink, or the paper.

“This ‘Green Tint’ can be removed by two distinct chemical pro-

cesses; and in my judgment the entire 'ground work' may be removed by either method, so that an alteration or photographic copy can be made with ease.

I remain, very respectfully,

Your most obedient,

CHARLES T. CARNEY.

"At a subsequent meeting—

"BOSTON, August 26th, 1857.

"The foregoing Reports having been made at the last meeting of the Committee, and having been had under consideration until now, the vote appended to the first Report was unanimously adopted, and it was also

"Voted: that 500 copies be printed for distribution among the Banks belonging to the Association.

Attest,

CHARLES B. HALL, *Secretary.*"

"From the 'Wall Street Broker,' 1858."

(EXTRACT.)

"*Patent Green Tint for Bank Notes a Humbug.*— \* \* We have many doctors of late in the production of different colored inks—for instance, the Desopyn patent red tint. Now we have another similar humbug, only it is green. \* \* \*

" \* \* The \$500 and the \$1000 Treasury Notes are printed with the green, and the \$100 with the red—neither of which is any security against counterfeiting. Secretary Cobb was hood-winked into the matter. \* \* \*

" \* \* \* The following letter is from the distinguished Chemist of the Association for the Suppression of Counterfeiting, composed of 300 New England Banks:—

"BOSTON, Jan. 25th, 1858.

" \* \* \* \* and join with you in saying, there is no doubt the Green Ink can be removed.

"The 'Tint' is sesqui-oxide of chromium.

"That oxide constituted the 'Tint' on the Notes submitted as specimens to the Associated Banks, and which were experimented upon by me; this oxide also forms the 'Tint' upon the specimen enclosed in your letter. \* \* \*

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHARLES T. CARNEY."

*From the New York Herald, March 3d, 1858.*

"CITY INTELLIGENCE."

*Counterfeits.*—The new counterfeit 'Fives' on the Housatonic Bank of Massachusetts are printed with a Green Tint, resembling perfectly that used upon the \$500 and \$1000 Treasury Notes and the \$5000 Clearing House Certificates, all of which were furnished with the recommendation that the Green Tint was a guarantee against counterfeiting by the photograph or other process. This, with the Resolution of the New England Association for the Suppression of Counterfeiting, that the Green Tint could not be recommended, would seem to show that it is a failure." \*\*

Notwithstanding these public testimonials to the insufficiency of the "Patent Green Tint" for the prevention of counterfeiting, Mr. Cisco contracted for the mere use of it at the moderate rate of \$5 per thousand impressions, and the entire contract for engraving and printing fifty millions of Treasury Notes was awarded about the 25th July, 1861, to the American Bank Note Company, the National not caring to accept even a part of it at such low prices!

The New York Bank Note Co. at this juncture arrived, and was at once informed by Mr. Cisco that the contracts were closed to the entire satisfaction of the Government. Consequently this company had no opportunity of submitting to Mr. Cisco any specimens of work whatever.

The writer could not but bring to mind the exciting scene that occurred only a few weeks previously, when an infuriated mob rushed wildly through the streets of New York city, crying "Hang out the American flag"—"Death to all Traitors"—when, as the surging multitude came yelling through Wall street, the establishment was closed and barred with trembling hands, and its officers were pale and blanched with fear, lest some one should

shout—"In that building they are printing Secession Bonds and Treasury Notes."

The scene was now changed, and those who had been working "*night and day*" for the enemies of Government, were rewarded with a princely contract.

This mighty contract for engraving, that, under a true system, would have called into employment every man who could wield the burin, was patched together in a few days by mere mechanical labor, and the use of old dies—while the most talented engravers were enlisting in the army at thirteen dollars a month, leaving for the South for want of employment here, or suffering in idleness in our midst. And here let us repeat the rule, in engraving a Note to prevent forgery, that "that which is easy and profitable to the original workman, is easy and profitable to the counterfeiter also."

The writer considered it a professional duty, not only to criticise the manner of giving out the Treasury Note contracts, but the manner of executing them also; and the consequence was, that when, on the 8th January, 1862, the Secretary of the Treasury asked Congress for an appropriation of \$150,000, in addition to \$300,000 already appropriated, to pay for the engraving, &c., the money was refused by the House on the ground of fraud in the contract. Not, however, on the part of the Secretary or Mr. Cisco. A month later, the Hon. Mr. Pearce presented to the Senate a statement of the Secretary, together with the agreements, and correspondence with the engravers, giving his reasons for the course pursued. In allusion to the writer, as one of the applicants for the engraving, the Senator said, "*one of them had skill but he had not capital.*"

What higher compliment could be paid to a professional man?

No objection being made, the Senate re-passed the appropriation, and on the 13th February it came before the House again for concurrence. The principal champion for the American Bank Note Co., the Hon. E. G. Spaulding, of Buffalo, made a personal attack upon the reputation of the writer, of which the following is an extract:

"This witness, who had skill, but who could not give security either for the performance of the contract or for his integrity, is the person to whom nearly all these slanders against the Treasury Department and against the parties who have executed this contract can be traced. Who is this witness? It turns out here in evidence that he was prowling about Washington *to get an office*; he went to the Treasury with a view to see whether he could not get some contract for engraving, when in the City of New York, where he is known, no Banker would employ him for a moment to execute engraving. Why? Because they would not dare to intrust him with plates for the performance of the work. His character was of such doubtful reliability all over the country with those who knew him, that he could not be intrusted to execute work for any Banker in the country, in the city of New York, or elsewhere."

\* \* \* \* "I know the vigilance of this man, Ormsby, in undermining and traducing respectable houses and respectable officials attached to the Government." \* \* \* \*

How the honorable Member knew that I "could not give security for the performance of the contract" does not appear, since I *had not the opportunity even of putting in a bid for one*. The only office applied for was to have that right granted.

I respectfully recommend the following extract to the Honorable member, as giving better reasons for my non-employment by Banks in New York, than any suggested in his speech.



*From the New York Leader (Editorial), April 20, 1861.*

"THE BANK SUPERINTENDENCY."

(*Extract.*)

\* \* \* "Every Bank Superintendent has thus far allowed only special favorites to engrave Bank Notes for the State of New York. The law has been construed in such a manner that if an engraver owned a Bank, he could not be allowed to do his own engraving, but would be compelled to employ the favorite of the Bank Department. Cases have frequently occurred where Banks have vainly endeavored to secure the privilege of having the work done at less costly establishments, but the powers of the Superintendency have been inexorably exercised to protect and advance the pecuniary interests of political Favorites." \* \*

I will now submit a practical illustration of the foregoing: Having been chosen to engrave a plate for the Perrin Bank, Rochester, and, having engraved said plate by authority; I applied to the *new* Bank Superintendent—the Hon. Marcus Schoonmaker, for permission to print said plate for said Bank; and the following proceedings ensued:

"BANK DEPARTMENT, }  
ALBANY, October 3, 1855. }

"W. L. ORMSBY, N. Y.

"SIR: I have received an intimation that some time since you had some connection with the getting up of some labels of some of Dr. Moffat's patent medicines, which throws a doubt upon your integrity and the propriety of selecting you as an engraver of Bank plates. I have not received it as yet in any definite shape, but sufficiently so for me to call your attention to it, in order that I may not act upon bare suspicion, but give you an opportunity to make it right by testimonials, &c., if there is no foundation for it.

Yours, &c.,

M. SCHOONMAKER, *Supt.*"

In order to purge his vast and comprehensive mind of the quack-pill affair, I immediately furnished the following, from Mr. Moffat's attorney.

"NO. 13 PARK PLACE, }  
October 4, 1855. }

"At the request of Mr. Ormsby, I do hereby certify that the suit brought against him by Dr. Moffat, for printing the Doctor's labels, was abandoned, and that the Doctor paid Mr. Ormsby his costs and expenses in that suit.

JNO. R. BRADY, *Att'y for Dr. Moffat.*"

Yet notwithstanding this Mr. Schoonmaker was afraid of injuring the "*feelings*" of his friends and favorites.

"BANK DEPARTMENT, }  
ALBANY, October 10, 1855. }

"W. L. ORMSBY, Esq.

"DEAR SIR: I have since I saw you made further inquiries in relation to the propriety of adding your name to my list of engravers. I find, however, to my regret, that the feeling is such that I can not, against it, take the responsibility of selecting you.

"It is a very unpleasant matter for me to arrive at such conclusion and act upon it, but I do not think it is proper for me to act differently, when there are such strong doubts, even if not well founded, existing in the minds of those for whom I act. It is a confidential, important and delicate trust, and demands from me the exercise of the greatest caution and regard for the feelings of those for whom I act in making an appointment.

Yours truly,

M. SCHOONMAKER."

This decision took the plate of the Perrin Bank of Rochester, which I had already engraved, out of my hands to be printed by his "*feeling*" "favorite."

Who were benefited by this exercise of a "delicate trust?" Not the Bank, because it paid more for its printing. No better work was acquired, because the engraving was already acceptably done. No more security was achieved, because I still own the "*dies*," and could make other plates exactly like it.

The law says: "The Superintendent shall get the plates engraved in the best manner to prevent counterfeiting." The very act of permitting my plate to be used

at all, was an admission that the law had been fulfilled ! and the very act of depriving me of the right to print the bills of the Bank, was an unwarrantable, as well as cruel and unjust exercise of an ill bestowed prerogative.

The law also says: The Superintendent shall keep "*possession and control, of the plates, dies, and materials.*" The following will show how efficient he has been in this:

*From the Detroit Advertiser, 1855.*

"Some of the Banks recently established in these States, under the general Banking Law, have adopted the corporate names and designs, vignettes, &c., upon the Notes of old established Banks in the State of New York. We have seen bills of the 'Jefferson County Bank at Watertown,' Wisconsin, so closely imitative of the bills of the old safety fund Bank in the State of New York of that name, that it would deceive. In the State of Indiana are to be found Bank Notes resembling in design, style, and of the same names as the following, in the State of New York, viz:—Bank of Albany, at *New Albany*; Bank of Attica; Bank of Auburn; Bank of the Capitol; Bank of Rensselaer; Bank of Rochester; Delaware County Bank. In each instance, above named, the State in which the Bank is located does not appear upon the Note, or if it does, is engraved in such small letters that a person with quick vision would have to put on spectacles to find it. Many of these Banks are gotten up and used for circulation in the city of New York, and never go to the State where they purport to be issued."

And I will add: in utter defiance of the healthy provisions of the N. Y. Banking Law; and

Further: at the very date of Mr. Schoonmaker's letter, there were in circulation in Wall St., a large amount of fraudulent City Bank and Ocean Bank Washington, bills, which were IMITATIONS of good Bank bills of the *same name* in New Jersey; and I, myself, forced the redemption of some of them, under a threat, publicly made, of *prosecution for counterfeiting*! The same "dies" that were used to engrave all these, were

also used indiscriminately for the State of New York; *and may now be found among the stock in trade of the American Bank Note Co.* by virtue of consolidation. Thus; instead of doing anything to guard the purity of our Bank circulation, or to protect the community against the most dangerous frauds, that were ever issued in any country, the Bank Superintendent unjustly deprived me of the right to exercise my legitimate profession on mere "doubts," when actual certainties were applicable to those, to whom he transferred my business, and into whose pockets he placed the benefit of my labor.

Without intending to manifest any degree of exultation other than is proper for the triumph of right over wrong, I will record the known fate of the principal actors in the foregoing proceedings: One fills a wealthy inebriate's grave; one, a "torpedo" wife assassinating outcast; one, murdered in a midnight brawl; one, a suicide in prison; and the last, a living, but politically dead defaulter.

"Requiescant in pace."

If the Hon. Mr. Spaulding will favor the New York Bank Note Co. with a visit, he will find that the proprietor, notwithstanding the troubles and depressions of the times, can say:

"I am Monarch of all I survey,"

or, in the language of Senator Pearce, on the floor of Congress, "president, director, and company himself."

He will find him surrounded with the implements of his profession—the works of his own hands—and the inventions of his own brain—transfer presses, dies, machines; geometrical, cycloidal, and rosette. He will be shown entirely new Bank Note configurations—the

only truly original and useful inventions in Note Engraving of the last forty years ; in short, he will find a "man and not a monster."

I am somewhat curious to know what other occupation, than the one I have followed so long, the Honorable Gentleman will recommend.

"Men maun do something for their bread,"

and I am certainly unfitted to be a member of Congress, if it be right for a Member of Congress to treat a fellow-citizen, whom he does not know, as the Honorable Gentleman has treated me.

But it is not true that I am thus ignored in my profession as my rivals would have the public believe. The fruits of my labors are everywhere where engraving is used. There is hardly one in the profession unindebted to my inventions for the facilities of carrying on his business, and even the monopoly engraving companies, employ to this day, machines invented by me, and often parade as specimen sheets, work executed by me twenty years ago, and much inferior to my later productions. It will be found, too, that my latest improvements have been infringed upon, without credit.

I allude to the work of the Kaleidograph, which is the only new quality of Engraving that has been invented since the year 1818 ; and which is peculiarly valuable for Bank Note purposes as affording a substitute for Geometrical lathe work equally beautiful and more secure against counterfeiting. The texture of its work is as readily distinguished from lathe work, as that of silk is from cotton goods. The following is the testimony of an experienced judge :

NEWARK, N. J., *April*, 1862.

I hereby certify that I have made two Geometrical Lathes for Bank

Note Engraving purposes; assisted in making two others, and operated the same, and am perfectly familiar with the character of such work. I have examined the work of the Kaleidograph invented by W. L. Ormsby, and am of the opinion that it is more difficult to counterfeit than the work of any geometrical lathe.

ALFRED TICHENOR.

The very nature of my business, that of executing, engraving, and building machines for other engravers, is an evidence alike of my professional skill and trustworthiness.

After the Hon. Mr. Spaulding has visited my humble establishment, let him visit the favorite of the Government over the way. . He also may be shown a geometrical lathe, and told that "*it is the only one in existence.*" Though they know that there are three others as good, if not better, in New York City. He will be shown the "Patent Green Tint," which is worth a vast sum (through Government patronage) to the owner thereof, but which is not worth to anybody else a Confederate paper dollar. There are some obsolete contrivances which, perhaps, they will be ashamed to exhibit—such as "Atwater's patent stripes," "Desopin's patent red," and "Seropean's patent yellow"—because of them people have learned by experience that they have "paid too dear for the whistle." But he will, undoubtedly, be shown the wonderful RED LETTERS, for the use of which Banks have paid thousands of dollars during the last ten years, under the impression that "the red ink is of such penetrating quality that it strikes through the paper, and appears on the other side, making alterations and photographic counterfeiting totally impossible"—but which are not worth as much even as the green tint for the purposes indicated (*See Ormsby's Bank Note Engraving, page 10*).

The following contrivance will illustrate the mode in which these red letters are produced.

## LEFT HAND.

Represents a common *type printing* press, and the "*Tympan*" which moves on hinges.

## RIGHT HAND.

Represents the bank note which is to be printed on both sides.

*Process.*—Charge the ~~tympan~~ with printer's ink, and impress it upon the left hand lower sheet, bring down the "tympan," and rub smartly with an ivory folder. Now place the right hand piece of paper between, rub again, and it will receive an exactly *coinciding* impression, on both sides, by "*offset*" alone.

The following will illustrate the security, that Banks have relied upon, and enjoyed ~~so long~~.

ON

*Process.*—Write on the slip of paper with a pencil, and corresponding marks will appear by "*offset*" on the other side. Then erase the pencil marks with India rubber, and substitute others by the same process—*ad libitum ad infinitum*.

The red or any other colored letters, on any circulating Bank Note, can be removed and altered as easily as this.

There need be no fear of this *exposé* giving counterfeiters any new information, as they have, for many years, practised this very simple and effective "protection against alterations." The Treasury Department, however, could not have been aware of the fact, when it sent for the inventor of the "red letters," and adopted

his useless plan, in the vain hope of thereby rendering the Treasury Notes less open to counterfeiting.

I respectfully recommend the following to the notice of the Hon. Mr. Spaulding:

*From the Rochester Evening Express, Dec. 10th 1861.*

"THE ART OF ENGRAVING—ITS HISTORY, &c.

(*Extract.*)

"A paper was read before the Rochester Historical Society, last evening, by D. M. Dewey, Esq. His theme was the History of the Art of Engraving.

\* \* \* "The next great improvements in this art are due to W. L. Ormsby, who, in 1825, was a young blacksmith in Wm. Cobb's shop in this city. \* \* \* \* \* But the laws of this State, which compel Banks to procure their plates of one monopolizing company, deprive Mr. Ormsby of his rightful reward for his ingenious and very useful inventions."

*From the Rochester Daily Democrat, Dec. 10th, 1861.*

(*Extract.*)

\* \* \* "Mr. Dewey touched also upon the historical matters relating to modern inventions. In this connexion, allusion was made to the fact that W. L. Ormsby, who was a blacksmith's apprentice in Rochester, thirty-six years ago, in the shop of one Cobb, is now one of the most celebrated of inventors in respect to Bank Note Engraving, having produced as many as twelve different inventions applicable to engraving."

The eloquence of Mr. Spaulding would find a more humane direction in having my right to pursue my legal and honorable profession in the State of New York restored to me; or at least having me exempted from the payment of taxes on real and personal property located in this State.

A better and more effective answer to the Hon. Mr. Spaulding was made on the floor of Congress by the Hon. Henry L. Dawes, of Mass. The following is an extract from his speech:



"MR. SPEAKER, I am not going to argue the matter which I submitted to the House a moment ago, or to tire the House with a repetition of it. I am content to leave upon the record, just as I put it there, my sentiments.

"I desire, however, to correct my friend from New York, who is troubled night and day with this witness who appeared before the committee of investigation—sometimes called the Van Wyck committee—and who says that he traces all I said to him, and all these 'slanders' upon the Secretary of the Treasury and Mr. Cisco, to him. Why does my friend persist in saying that I am slandering the Secretary and Mr. Cisco? He says he is going to stand by them. He cannot stand by them any more faithfully than I do. He cannot bear testimony to their integrity any more sincerely than I do; and I am not to be bluffed off from this thing by any such talk as that. I will relieve him, however, by telling him that not one particle of what I stated here to the House to-day came from that awfully wicked witness. I have not seen him, conferred with him, heard from him, or cared for him in this connection. I do not know him from Adam; I do not know him from Eve (*laughter*); I do not care anything about him. I will tell the gentleman who my witness is. I do not know that he is any better; but I tell him that it is myself, my own eyes, and my own ears. I have been to New York, and personally I have possessed myself of the facts I here state to the House, without any man's help, without any man's knowledge, without any man's attempt either to deter or to buy me.

"Now, he may talk about 'slanders,' and he may heap his anathemas upon this man Ormsby as much as he pleases; but I say to him that it is due to Mr. Ormsby that he should bring some scintilla of evidence here touching Ormsby, before he contents himself with justifying this contract by declaring him to be unworthy of credit.

"I have possessed myself of the facts in that case, not dependent on any officer or on any man engaged in engraving in New York or elsewhere, but on men of my own personal acquaintance in my own State (Mass.)—Bank Presidents, Bank Cashiers, and others.

"*Mr. Speaker, men from my own State, occupying high public positions, who have had occasion to know, have voluntarily to me borne testimony to the integrity as well as to the skill of this man Ormsby, who is whistled down the wind by this combination of nine corporations in one, incorporated over and doubled so as to be above suspicion of want of integrity in the eyes of any New York man. Whether he be or not, does not pertain particularly to this contract.*

"The whole engraving of Bank Bills in this country has not yet, thank God, come to be settled on the American Bank Note Company. If light-

ning should strike that company, if God in his providence should remove it from the face of the earth, are we to be without a paper currency? Are we to be driven, in the face of my friend from New York, to take gold and silver, because the American Bank Note Company has ceased to exist? All this is a pretence, sir. There is nothing in it. These men have made my honest and true friend from New York believe what he says—and he states it with all that sincerity which characterizes everything he says, because he believes everything he says; and I should have believed it, if I had stayed here, as he did, and attended to the duties of my place. But I wandered away, and possessed myself of facts, which I am willing to put on record here. But I do not care to repeat them, and I leave this matter. The House may vote this amendment of the Senate, and will do so without me, if at all. I am convinced, sir, that there is an attempt to make the Government believe that this work cannot be done except at an enormous and extravagant price. Why does not my friend employ his time a little in ascertaining whether he can contradict any of these things which I have put on the record? Why does he not tell the House that the Government, if he knows the fact, possesses itself of the dies with which the plates are printed, so that the notes cannot be counterfeited? Why does he not tell the House that the very dies with which our Treasury Notes are printed are not employed to make the Treasury Notes of the Confederate States?

“Why does he not tell the House that this company is now engaged in buying up the only company which can compete, and then representing it as a bogus opposition? No: my friend contents himself with accusing me of being led here by a witness whom he dislikes, whom I have not seen, whom I do not know, and about whom I care nothing. I do not recollect now that I ever saw him.”

Mr. Dawes was sustained by a vote of the House, 67 to 52.

“So the amendment of the Senate was non-concurred in.”

The reports of the debates in Congress on the question occupy twenty columns of the *Washington Daily Globe*, Jan. 9th, Jan. 11th, Feb. 8th, and Feb. 13th, 1862.

Though I have earned and lost a fortune—suffered a ten years’ persecution—been deprived of my business franchise—and perilled, without dishonor, reputation itself; this triumph is more grateful to my heart than

would have been all the contracts of Government that were bestowed elsewhere.

While the second Treasury Note bill was under discussion in Congress, I wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury for the usual instructions furnished to engravers, &c. Signing myself

W. L. ORMSBY,  
*Proprietor of the New York Bank Note Co.*

I received the following reply:

"TREASURY DEPARTMENT, }  
February 7th, 1862. }

"SIR: Your letter of the 3d instant has been received.

"It will be necessary for you to furnish the Secretary with the names of the President and Directors of the New York Bank Note Co., the act under which the charter was granted, the date of the charter, the amount of capital actually invested, the location of the company's rooms, and what number of presses and workmen are now in their establishment; and also what number of impressions daily you are prepared to furnish. "Yours very respectfully,

"GEO. HARRINGTON, *Asst. Secy. of Treasury.*

"W. L. ORMSBY, Esqr., *New York Bank Note Co.*"

This is the only document I have received, either from the Treasury Department or Mr. Cisco, in answer to many communications; and it plainly indicates that none but chartered rights will be recognised or respected, and that Government is utterly reckless in regard to the prevention of counterfeiting. Thus the entire control of the Note Engraving business, on the die and patch-work system, has passed from the artists into the hands of mere capitalists, as the writer predicted many years ago.

*"Sic transit gloria Mundi."*

Proposals for furnishing the second instalment of 100 millions of Treasury Notes were advertised for, and the following is an extract from the advertisement:

"Models of Notes on the face will be in the *same form as now used*, and on the backs will state the privilege of legal tender and *other privileges stipulated in the law.*"

The American Bank Note Co., in this official advertisement, is plainly informed that it may use the plates already engraved, "Patent Green Tint" included, the *face* plates without any alteration, and but slight additions to the backs.

The following are the reasons why it was impossible for me to compete for the engraving of any of the second issue of Treasury Notes:

1. The Treasury Department did not afford me the same *facilities for preparation* that were extended to other establishments—heretofore similarly cared for.

2. The *Advertisements* for proposals were *ingeniously framed*, so that there was almost an *impossibility* of competing with the aforesaid establishments.

3. When, in spite of these disadvantages, I had prepared to comply, as far as practicable, with the terms of the advertisements for proposals, I was informed in Washington upon reliable authority, that the consideration of bids would be a mere farce, *as the work of engraving and printing was already in progress and partly completed.*

Corroborated as follows:

"I do hereby certify that I saw Mr. Ormsby in Washington, D. C., on the day appointed for opening the bids for furnishing Treasury Notes, and know that he was prepared with specimens of work, forms of Notes, and the securities required (\$50,000) for the performance of contracts, and that he, reluctantly, withheld them for the reasons stated above.

R. C. Root."

NEW YORK, 23d April, 1862.

This was the third time that I was in Washington,

prepared with every thing except *political influence*.  
Verily

"A prophet is not without honor save in his own Country."

Within the time that I was waiting in Washington last July, in the vain effort to obtain five minutes' interview with the Secretary of the Treasury, I could have established in that city, at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars, the most perfect Bank Note Engraving Establishment in the world, capable of executing all the Government work on principles that would have saved millions to the people—encouraged meritorious labor—and avoided much of the distress that is now impending.

Even while I write this distress has been foreshadowed by an arrest in St. Louis, as follows:

#### ASTOUNDING DEVELOPMENT!

*Two Mammoth Counterfeit Establishments Broken Up—One Hundred Thousand Dollars in Bogus U. S. Treasury Notes Seized.* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* In a room above was found an engraver's work-shop! On the work-bench were a variety of tools, and a Bank Note plate covered by a piece of paper. On entering the room with the officers, Hill stepped quickly to the bench, seized a Bank Bill and began crumpling it in his hand, seeking to destroy it. • It was forced from him and found to be a genuine \$10 U. S. Treasury Note, which had evidently been much used in copying from and imitating.

On opening two closets the policemen found several large bunches of unfinished bogus \$10 United States Treasury Notes. They were strung upon a thread and hung up for drying the first impression upon their faces. There were twenty-five hundred of these bills. The backs were still blank, and the red and green impressions remained to be put on. In the room were also found eleven Bank Note plates, and the following implements and materials used by Bank Note Engravers; parts of a stamping and printing press, a ruling machine, pots of black, green, and red printing ink, rollers for inking plates, two gas lamps for heating, a fine spring gauge for measuring letters, a burnisher, a graver's scraper, a dozen fine gravers, an eye-glass, a spring compass, scribers, files, camels' hair brushes, a muller and stone for grinding ink, with numerous other articles of the engraver's craft. There was also a quantity of paper in

sheets, designed for making into Bank Notes, and a considerable quantity already cut and ready for the first impression.

*The plates for the front and back of the ten dollar United States Treasury Note were of steel, and executed admirably. An expert tells us that the die work is a very accurate imitation of the original, but the vignette is inferior and scratched.* The nine remaining plates were thickly covered over with some preparation for preserving the engravings, and cannot be described till cleansed. One of them, however, is evidently for a XX, on the Bank of Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Another, incomplete, is for a \$5 United States Treasury Note.

The reader will notice that the geometrical and cycloidal portion of the work was better done than the vignette; and that the green pigment was no impediment.

The first step towards repudiation, too, has been this very day announced; motives of self-protection may also cause repudiation of the whole.

*From the New York Times, April 22, 1862.*

#### THE MUTILATION OF TREASURY NOTES.

Evidence has been received at the Treasury Department that the work of mutilating Treasury Notes has become quite a business, and not an unprofitable one. For instance, the mutilator takes one ten dollar Note, and tears off a tenth part on one corner, and passes off the Note for ten dollars—nobody questioning that it is perfectly good. He takes another Note of same denomination, and tears off a tenth, etc. \* \* \* \* Singular as it may seem, this business has become so extensive that the attention of the government has been called to it, and *it is decided as the only effectual way of checking the evil, not to redeem any Note at par unless it is whole, and to deduct one dollar for every tenth part of a Note torn off, and in that proportion for larger amounts removed.* I make the above statement upon the authority of the Treasurer of the United States.

The above is an old mode of fraud, and should have been foreseen and guarded against. But whoever trusts to selfish and unskilful generals must expect to lose battles. The destruction of one black crow will not destroy the species.

It is evidently necessary for public protection that

paper money should be inspected or assayed by competent judges before it is issued.

Of what avail was it for those who framed the New York Banking Law, to require Bank Superintendents to procure the engraving in the "best manner to prevent counterfeiting?" What more have Bank Superintendents ever known than those who appointed them? Of what value is the cursory opinion of Mr. Chase, Mr. Cisco, Mr. Spaulding, Mr. Pearce, or anybody else, that "the engraving of the Treasury Notes has been well done!" By what rule do they judge? What is their standard of value?

If their judgment, without special investigation, is not at the mercy of their fancy, it certainly is to that of the engraver, whose interest it happens to be, not to do the work at the lowest, but at the highest expense. Not to make the work permanent and secure, but, in fact, to make it pleasingly insecure. Not to do it so as to last, because a customer would be lost, but to do it so that a customer may be obliged to come again.

We hazard nothing in saying that that Treasury Note can not be well engraved, that is patched together in haste by the use of dies, or types, previously used for inferior purposes; or that has in its composition a single die that was previously used on Confederate Bonds; or that is so constructed, that William Henry Vaughan—the first counterfeiter—were he alive again, could procure a complete counterfeit of it, piece by piece, of the best engravers in the country.

We are now in the second century only in the use of paper money, yet there has never been (anterior to the publication of the writer in 1852) even an attempt to reduce the manufacture of it to a true science, in order to prevent counterfeiting, without regard to private interests. In accordance with the principles of that

work, a bill was introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature, in 1860, and passed to a third reading. But by the interference of interested parties, its most salutary provisions were defeated. (See *Boston Bee*, March 12th, 1860.) The Hon. Thomas Hills, of Boston, originated the movement.

Lest it should be thought, that, through my discoveries, I claim to *prevent* counterfeiting; I will simply say, that I merely claim to drive the counterfeiter to the necessity of *doing the work himself*. If he can do it well enough to pass, he can do it well enough to earn an honest living. We all know that bad coins are detected by base metal. We now have no such guide to detect bad Notes. Why? Because the genuine work, more frequently than the false, is employed in manufacturing counterfeits. The reforms that I propose will make the rule, which works well with coins, equally applicable, effective, and sure, in detecting bad Notes.

In a true system of engraving, to find a man's own work upon a counterfeit Note, would be evidence of his guilt, and

“Confirmation strong as proof of holy writ.”

But, let the rule prevail at this time, and perhaps not a man that has ever engraved a die, would escape the prison.

What is this discovery which I have made?

It is, that a Bank Note, whatever may be its denomination, should be one indivisible picture, or, in brief, a

### UNIT.

What is the standard of value?

The quality of preventing alterations entirely, and admitting of counterfeiting itself, by no easier way than



that in which the original is engraved—compelling the counterfeiter to be himself an engraver. The protection being in exact proportion to the quality and amount of labor involved.

How is the science of assay applied?

To analyze the Bank Note, and ascertain and determine its various qualities for preventing all known modes of fraud, so as to apply an effective remedy.

The foregoing is the *foundation* of a true system of Bank Note Engraving.

It is a common and grave error to consider improvements to *facilitate* manufacture, in this business, in the same category with those to facilitate the manufacture of boots, shoes, hats, or any other article of commerce. It must be kept in view that the quality of *inimitability* is imperative in the one case, which is not necessary in the other.

That which facilitates the manufacture of *any thing*, facilitates the *re-manufacture* of it.

He who invents any thing to facilitate the manufacture of boots and shoes, is a public benefactor, and may be justly rewarded by an exclusive right to its use for a season, by "patent."

He who invents any thing to facilitate the manufacture of Bank Notes, facilitates the re-manufacture of them, or, in other words, the *counterfeiting* of them also, and no patent, in the nature of the case, can prevent counterfeiting.

The highest order of protection against counterfeiting Bank Notes is a historical vignette, because the greatest variety of talent is required in its execution. It bears the same relation to geometrical lathe work that fresco painting does to wall-paper, or Mozart music to that of the hand-organ.

The protection against counterfeiting in such a vig-

nette, consists, simply, in the presumed lack of skill on the part of him who attempts it. Nothing more.

Now let such a vignette be enlarged or shaped to the size of a Bank Note, and the highest protection against counterfeiting that the graphic art can possibly achieve will be obtained.

This plate, if properly designed, will be proof against alterations, and if it be printed in two colors, which may be done without extra expense, it will be proof against photographic counterfeiting also; and thus by the application of the most simple means we may keep the counterfeiter continually at bay.—Not on principles of cycloidal mystery or secrecy, but of utter defiance. Not because he does not know how the work is done, but because he can not do it.

THE UNIT SYSTEM, I am happy to state, is not altogether an untried theoretical problem, as the following will show :

"NEW YORK, April 9th, 1862.

"STEPHEN BEEDE, Esq., *Cashier of the Carroll County Bank, N. H.*

"DEAR SIR—Having frequently had occasion to refer in newspaper and book publications to the One Dollar Note which I engraved for your Bank in 1854, as embodying great security against alterations and counterfeits, I respectfully request that you will favor me with your opinion of its merits as practically obtained by its circulation.

"Respectfully your obt. serv.,

W. L. ORMSBY."

"Carroll County Bank, Centre Sandwich, N. H., April 22d, 1862.

"W. L. ORMSBY, Esq.,

"Dear Friend—In answer to thy request of my opinion of the merits as practically obtained from the circulation of our One Dollar Notes, engraved by thee in 1854. There has never been an attempt, to my knowledge, to alter or counterfeit them, and I believe them to be as secure from a successful operation of that kind, and perhaps more so, than any engraving I have ever seen. But their appearance, after having been a little worn, is not what I would like. As a handsome Bank Bill, with an attractive picture upon its face, will be taken better care of and carried longer in the pocket than one of an opposite character.

"Respectfully,

STEPHEN BEEDE, *Cashier.*"

I am very glad that the gentleman has referred to the Beauty of a Bank Note as one of its requisites. My mind has been so intent on the qualities that our soldiers and their families would value, viz. *genuineness* and *redeemability*, that I had quite forgotten this excellence. On this point I am quite sure that if I could make Bank Notes so perfectly beautiful that people would *keep them in their pockets* as gems of art, all Banks of issue would throng my studio. But I know that all Banks of issue are not, by design, Banks of redemption. I know, also, that this class of Banks is the first to profit by any prevailing fashion.

The Carroll County Bank Note was the very first design on the Unit System. It was engraved with my own hands, simply with a view to protection against counterfeits. Both the designer and engraver can improve upon it. Let us have the true System of security first; and we can embellish and beautify in the highest degree required. It is enough that the foundation of the Unit System has proved sound by actual experiment. The following is additional testimony on this point.

"PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 1st, 1862.

The undersigned has been engaged in teaching the science of detecting counterfeit, altered, and spurious Notes, to Rail Road Officers, Bankers, and in twenty Mercantile Colleges during ten years past, and hereby certifies that, in his opinion, the One Dollar Notes of the Carroll County Bank, N. H., engraved by W. L. Ormsby, combine more security against alterations and counterfeiting than any other Notes in circulation in this country.

A. THOMPSON."

It will be observed by the date that the above was written since the Treasury Notes have been issued, and it can also be shown that the cost of a Carroll County Note was less than that of a Treasury Note.

We should think that it would be readily understood

why a consolidated and incorporated stock company for carrying on the Bank Note Engraving business on the "die" system, looks discouragingly at, and speaks disparagingly of, such an innovation. The frightful expenses of Banks will be alluded to, as if the pecuniary affairs of those institutions had always lain heavy on the heart. Then the interminable time for Banks to wait *for the worth of their money* will be greatly deplored—and, worse than all, real, *bonâ fide* engravers will have to be sought for, and employed, and then—exeunt "Sesqui-oxide of chromium," "cycloidal configurations," and the last lingering hope of the counterfeiter's "great expectations."

#### WORTHLESS PLANS FOR THE PREVENTION OF COUNTERFEITING.

1. The American System of Duplicate Dies or Types. Exploded by an investigating committee of the Bank of England in 1820.

2. Perkins' Stereotype Plate. Useless in consequence of the facilities it afforded for counterfeiting.

3. Mr. Star's typographical colored printing plan, lost his bet of \$500, and everybody's faith at the same time.

4. New York General Banking Law, or plan of having all Banks in the State use the same forms of Notes. Abandoned by order of the Bank Superintendent, because it facilitated counterfeiting.

5. The plan of using the same plate for the different branches of State Banks. Same objection as the last.

6. Red Letters. Insecure, because they can be erased, altered, or imitated as easily as pencil marks.

7. Atwater's Patent Stripes. A secret mark, affording no protection to the public, because few were familiar with it. Easily imitated.

8. Combining vignettes so as to cover the Note, in imitation of the Unit System—an artful dodge.

9. Geo. D. Lyman's sectional arrangement of the note for different denominations. Same objection as No. 7.

8. The plan of having the number of vignettes correspond with the denomination of the Note. Same as last.

11. The plan of having the number of figures in a vignette correspond with the denomination of the Note. Same as last.

12. Schoonmaker's plan of a different location of the comptroller's die for different denominations. Same objections as the last.

13. Captain Glynn's Anti-Anastatic Bank Note Paper. A failure.

14. The plan of having different sizes of Notes for different denominations. Inconvenient and impracticable.

15. Desopyn's Red Tint. Met an early death.

16. Seropyan Patent Yellow Tint. Exposed and exploded by R. C. Root, Esq., of N. Y., who practically proved that it was no protection against counterfeiting.

17. Cycloidal or Geometrical Tints of any color. Easily counterfeited by lithographers.

18. Geometrical or Cycloidal Back Plates of any color. Same objection as last.

19. Patent Unalterable Anti-Photographic Green Tint. Altered and exploded by the Boston Association for the suppression of counterfeiting, composed of Three Hundred Banks! in 1857.

“The earth hath bubbles as the water has,  
And these are of them.”

The largest number of the above plans, have sprung up, and exploded, within the *eight years* that the One Dollar Notes of the Carroll County Bank, N. H., have been earning a respectable and permanent reputation on the UNIT SYSTEM.

## CYCLOIDAL REVIEW.

RISE, PROGRESS, AND DECLINE OF THE ENGRAVER'S INTEREST IN  
THE BANK-NOTE BRANCH OF HIS PROFESSION.

It is within the memory of living men, that when, in times past, a Bank desired to procure plates engraved, and Bills printed, an Engraver was applied to in person. The distinctive appellation of Bank Note now attached to his profession, had not then acquired any degree of speciality. If the Bank was located in Charleston or Savannah, the Engraver would proceed thither with his modest atelier and execute on the spot the work required.

As Banks increased, the business of engraving for them increased also; until it was said of a man who practised in that line "he is a Bank Note Engraver."

The large profits in the business naturally led to the formation of companies to carry it on—as the "Graphic Co.," and the "New England Bank Note Co." These companies introduced mechanical contrivances to embellish their Notes, and, at the same time, expedite the work, and make it more profitable.

The application of geometrical lathe work, the invention of engraving on steel, hardening, transferring, etc., forms a remarkable era in the art. At first the engravers honestly thought that they had achieved perfect protection against counterfeiting; but an investigation by the Bank of England proved its fallacy beyond question.

Up to this period (1820) there had been few, if any, cases of counterfeiting in this country; nor was such a publication as a "Bank Note List," or "Counterfeit Detector," known in any part of the world; and it is especially remarkable, that, with the advent of this geometrical steel die system, so vauntingly introduced to make counterfeiting impossible, the rapid increase of the crime receives its date; and it was not long ere

weekly lists of counterfeits began to appear in the newspapers, and finally to occupy the entire paper itself; the increase in the lists growing more and more disproportioned to the increase of Bank Note circulation.

From these facts it is self-evident, that the *pretended* improvement in Note Engraving was, and still is, a *real* auxiliary to Note counterfeiting.

Still the engravers flourished. New companies were formed, and when a Bank complained of counterfeiting, it was urged to greater expenses, and never was urged to anything else.

Rivalry in business was carried to extremes; and special agents, who could not engrave at all, were employed to travel and "drum," like pedlars of pinch-beck jewelry which they sell for gold.

Power and wealth accumulated, because the engravers kept every die they were paid for engraving. The circulars read thus: "All plates and dies engraved by us invariably retained by us."

Another and serious objection to this system of Note engraving presented itself. As the original founders of engraving companies passed away, men of capital occupied their places, until at last the latter alone remain, in power supreme, and Bank Officers are brought face to face with the Engraver no more.

When business is dull, the hired Engraver is turned away, and still the capitalist lives in affluence on the profits constantly accruing from the use of the artist's previous labor, in the shape of accumulated dies.

And still the counterfeiters flourish—still the Banks complain—still they are only offered

"The protection that vultures give to lambs."

I called public attention to these facts ten years ago, and when the other Bank Note Companies saw how the proposed reform would diminish their profits, it became

a business necessity for them to malign me. But, in the ten years' struggle that ensued, every Bank Note Company perished, or was absorbed in one establishment. Mine alone remained, and I still remain, the sole representative working engraver, at the head of a Bank Note Establishment, in the entire country.

The American Bank Note Co. is a gathering of the fragments of my broken cotemporaries; and a consolidation of them under a chartered corporation, to be controlled by money brokers, who will attempt to coerce, if they cannot flatter, all new Banks to patronize them for the sake of "dividends." Bank Note lists will favor them, because, when counterfeits cease to circulate, the business of describing them expires.

The protection that will be afforded to Bank and Government issues, has already been shadowed forth, in the persistent and unblushing recommendation, and use, of every patent, however useless, that will serve to lull the fears of Bankers, and fill the company's purse. The public may be cautioned against all Notes except those engraved on the "Sesqui Oxide of Chromium," and "Cycloidal Configuration" principles—indeed, unless there is some interposition of Divine Providence, the prospect seems to be, that passports to Heaven will, eventually, be printed in "Patent Green Tint." But unless they are more secure against counterfeiting, the "narrow way" will be terribly crowded.

The business of engraving, which is exceedingly simple, is purposely rendered mysterious and incomprehensible, by technical rodomontade, in order to give it an air of scientific dignity; and a simple proposition is overspread with cant, which would be better understood by using more common sense, and less pedantry. For instance:

A tailor's thread, in sewing a "back-stitch" seam, de-



scribes a "cycloidal line;" and the thread forms a "geometrical, cycloidal, and rosette configuration," in working a button-hole.

#### APPLICATION.

In the consolidation of the American system of Note Engraving the "configuration" is completed; and in every deceptive compound-cycloidal-loop that has formed it, from the days of Perkins's "stereotype plate" to those of the "Patent Green Tint," a Bank Superintendent or other Officer has been inclosed, forming a "*portrait gallery*" of distinguished—patrons. "Here are stored away plates for the entire issue of more than fifteen hundred Banks in the United States; those for the Treasury Bonds of the United States, and the Government of Canada; for the National Bank of Greece; for Banks in Costa Rica, Guayaquil, Panama, and St. Thomas; for Swiss Rail Road Bonds, and Postage Stamps of the British Provinces, besides those for Bonds, Drafts, Certificates, Bills of Exchange, and other COMMERCIAL PAPER." Thus Banks and Governments are enclosed in the cycloidal coil, and subsidized. "Price of engraving a plate of four notes, \$500; four *shinplasters*, \$500;" Confederate Bonds and Treasury Notes in proportion, and "*fifteen per cent.*" discount to the sagacious United States Government! We engrave for Russia, and send duplicate dies there; for the Southern Confederacy, ditto. Within this perfect cycloidal configuration, the counterfeiters are about to hold a jubilee—to reap a harvest.

One hundred and fifty millions of United States Treasury Notes—engraved in "ten days," by patching together material previously used for inferior purposes, and printed in three colors, one on the top of another, making confusion worse confounded, at as much expense as possible—signatures engraved—a legal tender in pay-

ment of all debts—as good as gold in thirty-two States, and almost as good throughout the world.—One hundred and fifty millions—*all alike*—each one of which is destined to wander, without a military escort, through Camps—Cottages—Farms—Banks—Tents—Ranches and Wigwams, until it becomes as ragged, torn, defaced, and soiled as a “*three years*” traveller in the Arctic Regions without supplies.—One hundred and fifty millions of them, destined to be counterfeited in the North, all the way to Kamskatka; in the South, to Patagonia; in the West, to China; and in the East, to Jerusalem.

















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